

July 11, 2005

Re: Advisory for Patients of Dr. Augustus Marsella
Information about Possible Infectious Disease Exposure

According to records from Dr. Augustus Marsella's office, you received regular injections of vitamin B12 as part of a weight loss program, recently or in the past--dating back to 2001.

An investigation by the Rhode Island Department of Health has determined that your physician's use of disposable syringes for injections did not guarantee 100% sterility. As a result, you may have been exposed to blood-borne communicable diseases such as Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV. Although we feel that the risk is very small, the Department of Health recommends that current and former patients of Dr. Marsella who received vitamin B12 injections undergo screening blood tests for these three infectious agents.

We advise you to contact your primary care physician and discuss the risks and benefits of testing. If the test is positive, you can work with your health care provider to obtain treatment, if necessary. If you are infected and do not undergo testing and treatment, you could expose yourself and others to serious complications of these diseases.

Please bring this letter with you when you visit your primary care physician. If you do not have a primary care physician, please consult the enclosed list for some places where you could arrange counseling and testing. We will be happy to help make a referral. If you or your primary care physician has any questions, the Department of Health has set up an information line at (401) 222-2577 that will be available between the hours of 9:00 AM and 4:00 PM Monday through Friday. Additional information about HIV, Hepatitis B or Hepatitis C is available on the RI Department of Health website, www.HEALTH.ri.gov or go to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website (www.cdc.gov); and select "Diseases and Conditions."

Sincerely,



David R. Gifford, MD, MPH
Director of HEALTH-RI

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Enclosure